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ABSTRACT

In January 1970 the Council on Library Resources (CLR) arranged a meeting to introduce the Dallas Public Library to the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) and to the idea of a project in which the Library would assume the role of acting as a center for CLEP information and providing assistance to CLEP candidates. The historical background of this project is presented in this report. It was agreed that, to determine the effectiveness of the public library in this area of adult education, a project of two years duration would be required. In determining the Library's effectiveness, the Library would be demonstrating whether or not public libraries are at this time prepared to assume this role in adult education. Five Branch Libraries of the Dallas Public Library System were selected to act as model public libraries in the project; they differ from each other in size of facility, staff, and collection, and they serve quite different socio-economic-cultural-ethnic communities. A copy of the proposal for the project is appended. (Related documents are LI003917 through 003919). (Author/NH)

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THE DALLAS PUBLIC LIBRARY INDEPENDENT STUDY PROJECT

BY

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DALLAS PUBLIC LIBRARY
DALLAS, TEXAS

August 1971

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THE DALLAS PUBLIC LIBRARY
INDEPENDENT STUDY PROJECT

Public libraries in this country are currently undergoing concerned study of their role in today's society. Librarians and library administrators in recent years have been involving themselves in function and self-studies to redefine the role of today's library. While it has never been an easy task to define the "public library" -- and library science students spend many thinking hours in such an exercise -- history has shown that basic to the American public library is a role and responsibility concerning adult and continuing education. A second basic ingredient to public libraries as we know them is change; even the non-user is aware of how his community's library has changed during his lifetime.

Most libraries are ready, surely, to take on whatever change in role is demanded them by their communities, and it seems obvious that, as education at all levels changes, the public libraries will also change. The change to meet new educational needs takes many forms in many libraries and more than a few libraries, faced with demands for more services than they can provide to their own professional satisfaction, respond with good intentions, though not always with good preparedness. Rarely, does a public library have adequate time and funds to study itself,

to stand back and observe its own readiness, and to demonstrate that it can assume a new role effectively. The Dallas Public Library has been particularly fortunate in being provided an opportunity to do just that.

In January 1970 the Dallas Public Library was visited by representatives of the Council on Library Resources, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the College Entrance Examination Board. The meeting, which had been arranged by the CLR, was to introduce the Dallas Public Library to the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) and to the idea of a project in which the Library could involve itself, one that would require the Library to assume the role of acting as a center for CLEP information and providing assistance to CLEP candidates. Those who attended that first meeting were only vaguely aware of CLEP, and it was referred to as Cleep for the first few months of discussion and consideration. A proposal of what a public library might do as a CLEP information and assistance center had been provided for the Library's consideration; it met with little enthusiasm, primarily because it suggested that professional librarians could and should provide counseling to those pursuing self-study toward credit by examination. Librarians have always provided reader's advisory service, but that, it was felt, differs from academic counseling, a quite specialized profession apart from librarianship.

As CLEP was described and the notion (since it was hardly more than that in January 1970) of external degree programs was discussed, the Library tempered its positive reaction with several concerns. It was with no little seriousness that the Library wondered if this would be an

appropriate role for the Library in Dallas to assume, or would the Library be accused by some of the local educational institutions of getting into their business. There was a particular concern for the possible reaction of the Dallas County Junior College District since DCJC is a true community junior college with the open door philosophy. The Library decided, however, that this was not really a conflict.

The second real concern the Library expressed was that it would want to be assured that area colleges and universities were willing to accept CLEP for credit. The Library did not want to encourage Dallas area citizens to prepare for CLEP examinations if there were no schools locally where they could go to enter a formal program and obtain credit for what they had learned independently. This question, though not completely resolved even at this writing, has decreased in importance as a concern as area colleges and universities have moved to accept CLEP. After study and consideration the Library affirmed interest in the idea and began designing a program which it could consider appropriate for itself. The CLR, NEH, and CEEB followed the progress of the proposal as it went through numerous drafts with encouragement and expressed enthusiasm (and, probably, with a bit of unexpressed impatience.) It was suggested that, if an appropriate project were proposed, funding would be available.

While the suggestion of possible funding acted as a stimulus, it also caused additional delay, for the Library exists as a Department of the City of Dallas and, as a Department, is subject to budgetary, auditing, personnel, etc. control of the City. This fact necessitated lengthy

discussions with City administrators, which, at times, seemed similar to negotiations that could have led to outright disagreements concerning the handling of grants.

As the Library continued working on an appropriate proposal, CEEB staff continued visiting the colleges and universities in the area, working with them toward the end that the schools would develop programs for accepting the CLEP examinations for credit. The Dallas Public Library's interest in CLEP and the proposed project were mentioned, and, it is suspected, the reputation of the Library and its active place in local continuing education efforts tended to encourage some of the schools. In one instance that encouragement resulted in action that had significant importance for the Library's project.

In June 1970 the Library received a call from Southern Methodist University advising the Library that the University was aware of the Library's interest in CLEP and of the proposed project and, further, that the University was ready to offer its support. That support took on the form of not only encouragement but also of actual participation in the project. SMU's offer to participate in the project was a considerable stimulation to the Library's effort to design a program that would truly provide the citizens with the best possible assistance in independent study and preparing for the CLEP examinations. It was particularly gratifying to the Library that a local institution of higher education approached the Library with an offer to assist and participate rather than the Library's seeking participation.

With Southern Methodist University's offer to provide the project with specific academic services, the Library proceeded, with input from

SMU, to redraft its proposal. The proposal took on a new look as the support of SMU was worked into the project. It was agreed that, to determine the effectiveness of the public library in this area of adult education, a project of two years duration would be required. In determining the Library's effectiveness, it seemed clear, the Library would be demonstrating whether or not public libraries are at this time prepared to assume this role in adult education. Five Branch Libraries of the Dallas Public Library System were selected to act as model public libraries in the project; they differ from each other in size of facility, staff, and collection, and they serve quite different socio-economic-cultural-ethnic communities.

The Library, according to the proposal, is:

1. To serve as an information center for the examinations program of the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) and of the participation of area colleges and universities.

2. To serve as a distribution center for materials relative to the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP).

3. To serve as a College Information Center by providing, for individual inquiry, multi-media presentations of information about area colleges and universities.

4. To serve as an advisory center to the adult interested in self-education by providing professional assistance in the selection of materials designed to further his goals in seeking academic recognition, by providing professionally prepared [by SMU faculty] study guides and reading lists, and by making available tutorial services [by SMU].

5. To serve as an educational resource in the motivation of business and industry to encourage employees toward independent study.

Southern Methodist University's responsibilities in the project, as described in the proposal, are:

1. SMU will hire appropriate members of the faculty to prepare study guides for the subject areas included in the CLEP examination program, such study guides to be made available at the five branch libraries to the adult seeking self-education and academic recognition through the Program.

2. SMU will hire appropriate members of the faculty to prepare annotated reading lists of non-textbook materials available at the Dallas Public Library for the subject areas included in the CLEP examination program, such reading lists to be approved by the Project Director and to be made available at the five branch libraries to the adult in the Program.

3. SMU will hire and make available appropriate resource persons from the academic community to act as tutors and seminar/workshop planners and leaders. These resource persons will provide aid, guidance, and seminars/workshops for the adults in the Program, such tutorial and seminar/workshop services to be provided on a scheduled basis at the five branch libraries. Seminars/workshops will include instruction in methods of effective independent study; the study of specific subjects; reading effectively; and the gathering and presenting of information as a basis for understanding

study and learning.

4. SMU will provide an ongoing evaluation of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the two years project by, in part, translating the objectives into measurable quantities, and including descriptions of the communities defined by the five branch libraries selected as model public libraries. The evaluation will be presented periodically in four (semiannual) reports and one final report.

Good publicity would be necessary to alert the citizens of the area to the project and to the availability of information on CLEP and of assistance in preparing for the examinations. Although the Dallas Public Library has a Public Relations Office, it was felt that, for the sake of the study and because not all public libraries have a PR Office, outside professional public relations services should be included in the project. It was not difficult to locate a PR professional who has interest in the Library and in education and who would be agreeable to provide, on a contractual basis, publicity and public relations services for the project.

Staff for the project includes a Project Director and a steno-secretary, both full-time. The Project Director is to formulate procedures and programs for the implementation of the project; instruct Dallas Public Library staff in methods of assisting in the program; direct workshops; consult Dallas Public Library staff and Southern Methodist University faculty and resource persons concerning reading materials; coordinate scheduling and activities of tutors and workshop/seminar planning; initiate and maintain contact with appropriate

community agencies, organizations, and institutions; initiate and maintain contact with business and industry in the community to encourage employee participation in the program; prepare and disseminate publicity and information about the project; prepare reports as required by the proposal and/or as requested by the funding agency.

An Advisory Committee was designed to provide direction and advice to the project and the Project Director. The make-up of that Committee includes the Library's Community Education Coordinator as Chairman with the following as members: the DPL's Associate Director for Public Services; the DPL's Adult Coordinator; SMU's Dean of Continuing Education; and a representative from the SMU School of Humanities.

In recognition that this project should have considerable interest and provide direction for public libraries and educational concerns throughout the country, the proposal calls for a National Interest Council. The Council is to meet twice a year (semiannually) during the two years duration of the project to hear reports from the Project Director, the on-going evaluation, and from on-the-line-librarians from the five Branch Libraries and to consider national implications. Representatives of these organizations were considered vital to the purposes of the Council: the American Library Association, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Council on Library Resources, the College Entrance Examination Board. Representatives from public libraries providing geographical distribution would also be sought. A chance happening in spring 1971 provided for another member of the Council.

In April 1971 a casual conversation between the Library's Deputy Director and a member of the staff of the American Association of Junior Colleges introduced AAJC to the Library's project and interest in CLEP and external degree programs. AAJC responded with great interest and enthusiasm and asked to be represented on the National Interest Council. The Library was pleased that an educational organization such as the AAJC would express its interest in the project because it suggested that AAJC, too, recognized the national implications of the effort. And, the Library hoped, somewhat selfishly for the sake of the Dallas area citizens, the AAJC's support of the project might urge the local junior college to move ahead with a plan to accept CLEP examinations for credit. AAJC's emergence as a member of the National Interest Council brought the size of the Council to eight.

With the proposal in its eleventh draft, the Library submitted its plan to the Council on Library Resources in January 1971. CLR, in turn, submitted the proposal to the National Endowment for the Humanities. NEH asked that the proposal's $100,000 budget be divided into two one-year operational budgets of $50,000 each. This was accomplished, and in June 1971 the Library was notified that the project had been funded for the first year ($25,000 from NEH plus $25,000 matching funds from CLR, totaling $50,000.) The NEH expressed its intention to provide $25,000 toward the second year's operation, and the CEEB promised the other $25,000.

During the period from January 1970 to July 1971, when a Project Director was appointed and plans got underway to implement the project

in September 1971, several developments had taken place locally and nationally that had influence on the project. The Carnegie Corporation of New York had funded the creation of the Commission on Non-Traditional Study; three members of that Commission had particular interest in the Dallas Project: Dr. Charles LeMaistre, Chancellor of The University of Texas System, who reacted favorably to the project after being provided a copy of the proposal, Dr. Stephen Spurr, President of The University of Texas at Austin, and Dr. Fred Cole, President of the Council on Library Resources. Indeed, the interest in external degree programs and the idea of an open university in the United States had gained considerable interest and support in the interim. The President of the new University of Texas at Dallas has expressed the hope that his institution could cooperate with the Dallas Public Library in this project and in other areas concerning non-traditional study and external programs. The timing for the Dallas Public Library to become involved in the encouragement of independent study seems particularly appropriate.

Some libraries, it must be noted, have already begun. Three public library systems have been involved with bringing information about CLEP to their communities: the Serra Regional Library System with headquarters in San Diego since May 1970; the Miami Public Library since January 1971; and the St. Louis Public Library since May 1971. These libraries have reported that television commercials about CLEP have brought in large numbers of inquiries and inquirers. All systems have performed as CLEP information centers, distributing information about the examinations program and assisting people when they have requested assistance. Some

have felt that they are not doing enough to help prepare their patrons for the examinations, and they suspect that some people who are attracted to CLEP through the public library become discouraged when they become caught up in the academic mechanism of the local schools. All the libraries consider this a natural role for public libraries.

With growing interest in non-traditional study and approaches to education and academic recognition and with public libraries already alerting citizens to the availability of "credit by examination," it does seem an appropriate time for the Dallas Public Library to set about to determine the effectiveness of the public library in this area of adult education. Mrs. Charity Herring, the Project Director for the Dallas Public Library Independent Study Project, while addressing the librarians from the five Branch Libraries that will serve as model public libraries for the project, reminded her audience that public libraries have always been centers for independent study. The difference now is, she said, "this project is geared to giving proper assistance toward a planned course of study, to helping people if they so desire to achieve a two years college education through their independent study, studying on their own time, at their own speed, in the library, at home, or elsewhere." This, as Mrs. Herring considers it -- and as this project should hope to demonstrate -- is just an extension of normal library service.

A PROPOSAL

DESIGNED TO

INVESTIGATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AS A CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY TOWARD ACHIEVING A TWO-YEARS COLLEGE EDUCATION

TOTAL AMOUNT OF REQUEST $100,000

Submitted by

THE DALLAS PUBLIC LIBRARY

CITY OF DALLAS, TEXAS 75201

Initiated by

MRS. LILLIAN M. BRADSHAW

DIRECTOR OF LIBRARIES

DALLAS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Submitted to

COUNCIL ON LIBRARY RESOURCES

ONE DUPONT CIRCLE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036

Revised April 27, 1971

PROBLEM:

Many adults are currently involved in independent study designed to enrich their personal lives, to improve their economic conditions, and to further their formal educations. Because these adults are unaffiliated with degree-granting institutions, little recognition is given to their activity. Within these self-motivated adults lies the potential for better educated citizens and a more profitable work force. At the present time, a large number of these adults read and/or study without proper assistance toward a planned course of study. If this independent study could be directed into approved channels which would provide academic credit for these efforts, such efforts would be much more meaningful in terms of personal and professional benefits. The current existence of the College Board's College-Level Examination Program provides a potential source for such an educational opportunity.

It would seem that, to most successfully utilize this Examination Program, appropriate information and advice about the Program and appropriate study guides, reading lists, and tutorial services should be provided in a setting conducive to independent study. Since many persons directed to independent study use public libraries and since public libraries have traditionally worked in the areas of self-education and continuing education, often in cooperation with other educational institutions, it follows that a public library, with an institution of

higher education cooperating and participating, could be an effective agent in providing informational and advisory services to these adults, said services designed to encourage independent study toward achieving a two-years college education.

In addition to information about assistance in self-education and the examinations program to encourage independent study toward achieving a two-years college education, the public library can provide service to those interested in college education in another way. Information about colleges and universities, including entrance requirements, participation in the College-Level Examination Program, tuition and fees, etc. can be made available in traditional formats of catalogs, bulletins, and brochures. A recent experiment in one Branch Library of the Dallas Public Library has suggested that a more successful and effective means of making college information available to inquirers is a multi-media approach; a Videosonic Audiovisual unit, which makes available tape listening and slide viewing presentations of colleges and universities in connection with printed materials from the schools, is utilized. The advantages of such a "College Information Center" is that it is available at the convenience of the individual inquirer, the information is repetitive, the message is multiplied in its impact through the different media used, and the information is coordinated at one point. The public library, which is a recognized source for information in the form of college catalogs, is an ideal place for such "College Information Centers," and such centers would support and supplement information being made available at the public library about the College-Level Examination Program.

This proposal seeks to investigate the role and the effectiveness of one public library system, the Dallas Public Library, with the cooperation and participation of one institution of higher education, Southern Methodist University, in assisting adults pursuing self-education directed to academic recognition in area colleges and universities and information about those and other colleges and universities.

PROPOSAL OBJECTIVES:

1. To serve as an information center for the examinations program of the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) and of the participation of area colleges and universities.

2. To serve as a distribution center for materials relative to the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP).

3. To serve as a College Information Center by providing, for individual inquiry, multi-media presentations of information about area colleges and universities.

4. To serve as an advisory center to the adult interested in self-education by providing professional assistance in the selection of materials designed to further his goals in seeking academic recognition, by providing professionally prepared study guides and reading lists, and by making available tutorial services.

5. To serve as an educational resource in the motivation of business and industry to encourage employees toward independent study.

6. To determine, through ongoing evaluation of the project, the appropriateness and the effectiveness of the public library in this educational arena.

7. To provide information on and guidance to the entire public library field in this new area of educational involvement.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT:

1. This project will be directed exclusively to the adult reader.

2. The Dallas Public Library system consisting of the Central Library and fourteen branches will serve as the base for the study.

3. Five branch libraries will be selected to participate as model public libraries serving different socioeconomic communities including lower middle, middle middle, upper middle, and higher stratifications, and one inner-city library serving a socioeconomically-culturally-ethnically mixed population.

4. A College Information Center will be established at each of the five branch libraries. An audiovisual unit will be installed in each location, and area colleges and universities will be provided audio tapes and slides or filmstrips for the production of sound-visual presentations of information about their entrance requirements, tuition and fees, curricula, examination programs, etc. Printed materials about the colleges and universities will be obtained to supplement the audio-visual presentations.

5. Southern Methodist University will hire appropriate members of the faculty to prepare study guides for the subject areas included in the CLEP examination program, such study guides to be made available at the five branch libraries to the adult seeking self-education and academic recognition through the Program.

6. Southern Methodist University will hire appropriate members of the faculty to prepare annotated reading lists of non-textbook materials available at the Dallas Public Library for the subject areas included in the CLEP examination program, such reading lists to be approved by the Project Director and to be made available at the five branch libraries to the adult in the Program.

7. Southern Methodist University will hire and make available appropriate resource persons from the academic community to act as tutors and seminar/workshop planners and leaders. These resource persons will provide aid, guidance, and seminars/workshops for the adults in the Program, such tutorial and seminar/workshop services to be provided on a scheduled basis at the five branch libraries. Seminars/workshops will include instruction in methods of effective independent study; the study of specific subjects; reading effectively; and the gathering and presenting of information as a basis for understanding study and learning.

8. Professional librarians of the Dallas Public Library will provide information services for the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) and the participation of area colleges and universities, readers advisory service for the adult in the Program, and workshops on using the library. The distribution of CLEP materials and information on participating colleges and universities will be handled by professional librarians in the five branch libraries.

9. The College Entrance Examination Board will provide training for the Project Director; workshops on the examinations and the philosophy of the CLEP for the librarians, resource persons, and faculty;

printing of reading lists and study guides; and publicity materials for use by and in the Dallas Public Libraries and for the news media.

10. Southern Methodist University will provide an ongoing evaluation of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the two-years project by, in part, translating the objectives into measurable quantities, and including descriptions of the communities defined by the five branch libraries selected as model public libraries. The evaluation will be presented periodically in four (semiannual) reports and one final report.

11. Professional public relations services will be utilized to produce and provide continual publicity and promotional attention to the Program.

12. An Advisory Committee will provide direction, advice, and assistance in setting objectives within the philosophy of public library service and professionally oriented continuing education goals and in planning procedures and programs designed to implement the project. The Committee will consist of the Dallas Public Library Community Education Coordinator, Chairman; the Dallas Public Library Adult Coordinator; the Dallas Public Library Associate Director for Public Services; the Dean of Continuing Education, Southern Methodist University; and the Dean, School of Humanities and Sciences, Southern Methodist University.

13. A National Interest Council will be formed to review the project and to consider the possible implications of this project for other public libraries and the expansion of the concept and

procedures of the project on a national basis. The Council will be appointed by the Advisory Committee and will consist of not more than eight members, including the following:

One representative each from:

American Library Association
Council on Library Resources
College Entrance Examination Board
National Endowment For The Humanities
American Association of Junior Colleges

Representatives from public library systems providing geographical representation

The Council will meet four times (semiannually) during the period of the project and will assemble to hear and consider the evaluation reports and the semiannual reports submitted by the Project Director.

PERSONNEL REQUIRED:

1. Project Director who will, with the direction, advice and assistance of the Advisory Committee, formulate procedures and programs for the implementation of the project; instruct Dallas Public Library staff in methods of assisting in the program; direct workshops; consult Dallas Public Library staff and Southern Methodist University faculty and resource persons concerning reading materials; coordinate scheduling and activities of tutors and workshop/seminar planning; initiate and maintain contact with appropriate community agencies, organizations, and institutions; initiate and maintain contact with business and industry in the community to encourage employee participation in the program; prepare and disseminate publicity and information about the project; prepare reports as required by this proposal and/or as requested by the funding agency.

2. Secretary who will, under the supervision of the Project Director, provide secretarial and clerical assistance to the project.

3. Consultant (part-time) for public relations and promotional services for the project.

4. Professional librarians and supportive staffs of the five branch libraries of the Dallas Public Library selected to participate in this project who will, under the guidance of the Project Director, provide direct informational and assistance services to the adults.

5. Existing staff of the College Entrance Examination Board's Council on College-Level Examinations who will provide training for the Project Director and orientation for the professional librarians, resource persons, and faculty involved in the project.

CALENDAR:

The period for the project will be two years beginning August 1, 1971, and concluding September 30, 1973. The first month, August, 1971, will be directed to the training and orientation of the Project Director, professional librarians, resource persons, and faculty in the form of training sessions, workshops, etc. Progress reports prepared by the Project Director and reports of evaluation prepared by the contracted evaluation services of Southern Methodist University will be furnished the Advisory Committee and the funding agency every six months according to the following calendar or as required by the funding agency:

March 1, 1972
September 1, 1972
March 1, 1973
September 1, 1973

Final reports will be due in October 1973 or as required by the funding agency.